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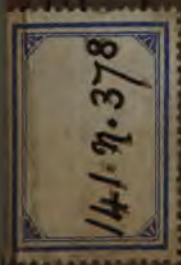
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RELIGIOUS
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MANUALS



HOW TO TEACH
THE
OLD TESTAMENT



ONAL-SOCIETY'S-DEPOSITORY-WESTMINSTER.



RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE MANUALS
FOR SUNDAY AND DAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

HOW TO TEACH
THE
OLD TESTAMENT

BY
REV. W. BENHAM, B.D.

VICAR OF MARDEN, STAPLEHURST



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HOW TO TEACH THE OLD TESTAMENT



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY WORDS.

1. Preparation of the Lessons.—Before I enter into details as to the proper method of teaching the Old Testament, I hope I shall be pardoned if I offer, as the result of a long experience, a few words on a very serious and important matter.

Take the 119th Psalm. Many readers of the present treatise know that every verse of that psalm has some reference to ‘the Statutes,’ or ‘the Testimonies,’ or ‘the Law’ or ‘Word’ of God. And yet there is a wonderful freshness all through the Psalm. There is no barren repetition, but always something new. We see the writer continually studying the Scriptures, and he has one end in view—namely, to know, and love, and rejoice in God’s will. Let me, then, at the outset, affectionately call attention to the writer of that Psalm, as affording to every teacher an example of how to study the Old Testament. He should do so in order to be made ‘wise unto salvation’ (2 Tim. iii. 15). To this end he must in his reading and in preparing his lessons ask for God’s help. And this not merely in formal words. He must endeavour to throw himself into entire sympathy with his subject, whatever it be. I am sure

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that no man ever attained eminence, either as teacher or preacher, however great his natural gifts, without first feeling the truth of what he was going to say, if it was a point of doctrine; without trying to act up to his own teaching, if it was a point of practice. 'I drew them with the cords of a man,' says Christ by His prophet. And His power lay in His own perfect obedience and sinless life. Those who would teach His truth must be continually labouring to walk in His steps, or they will not draw with His cords. The cords will break. On the other hand, a man may have great and serious faults, known of men; but if they see him manfully striving to conquer them, they will give heed to his teaching. To this end, some part of the teacher's Sunday should be given to a study of the Scriptures, in which, as far as possible, he should forget his classes and lessons, and study for himself alone, to deepen his own spiritual life. Then his teaching, almost unconsciously to himself, will have a wonderful life and power in it. His arrows will hit their mark. And, having taught others, he will not himself be a castaway (1 Cor. ix. 27). I need not pursue this subject further, but will give a few texts of encouragement and promise to all who seek the assistance of God's Holy Spirit in their Bible studies—Ps. cxix. 18; John xiv. 16, xvi. 13; Luke xxiv. 45; Acts xvi. 14; Ps. xcii. 15; Luke xi. 13.

2. **Practical Suggestions.**—A few practical suggestions, too, of a general character will not, I hope, be out of place, seeing that at any rate I can give them this recommendation—whatever success I myself have gained in my work, I owe much to following out my own plan. Keep a Bible interleaved, or with a good margin, have it ready at hand and note down *as shortly as possible* anything which you meet with which will illustrate the passage you so annotate. My own Bible (one of Bagster's blank-page editions) is annotated with references to 'Stanley,' 'Vaughan,' 'Pusey,' 'Sumner's Apostolical Preaching,' 'Maurice,' 'A.P.B.' [Annotated Paragraph Bible of the Religious Tract Society], &c. &c.

Opposite to 1 Kings xxii. 49 I find written, 'S.P.C.K. 1,436.' Turning in the Christian Knowledge Society's list to the tract so numbered, I find that it is a very telling tract by Mr. Storr, entitled, 'Jehoshaphat would not ; or, Learn to say No.' Against 2 Kings vi. 5, 'S.P.C.K. 1,062' ['The Borrowed Axe']. Against 1 Sam. xxv. 23, 'S.P.C.K. 1,121' ['Abigail the Peacemaker']. Against Ezek. ix. 4, 'S. P. C. K. 1,432' ['Sorrow for Abounding Iniquity']. Against 2 Kings iv. 6, 'Trench's Justin Martyr, p. 267.' This reference is to a very beautiful poem on 'The Widow's Oil,' by the Archbishop of Dublin.

These are only specimens. When I read the chapter I am reminded by my reference that something good has been said about this and that passage, and I turn to it, for every book or tract referred to is within my reach. And I recommend my young readers to begin their annotations early, and they will gradually make for themselves a valuable Biblical Encyclopædia.

Let it not be objected that it presupposes the possession of a large library. On the contrary, the system only ensures the use of what you have. Any theological work which you read, any tract which you meet with, if it is good for anything at all, may thus be turned to account. If I pick up a penny sermon or treatise at a bookstall, and find it worth the penny, I duly number and index it, and stow it away, and make the reference in my Bible. I do not advocate copying long notes from books ; it takes a long time, and generally you do not read them afterwards. Only make a reference, and that to works within your reach.

As regards your library, of course it depends much on your depth of pocket. The National Society has just issued a very valuable list of books, which may be studied with great advantage. For those with small incomes I recommend the new 'Commentary of the S.P.C.K.,' or the Religious Tract Society's 'Annotated Bible ;' Smith's 'Smaller Dictionary,' and 'Aids to Bible Students,' which is

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published by the S.P.C.K. for a shilling. It is an improvement on the 'Helps' in the Oxford Bible. Possessed of these, the teacher will never be at a loss. For myself, using the above works for arrangement of facts, I find for sermon purposes no commentator to equal Matthew Henry. I have another little book always lying on my table, which costs sixpence. It is called 'The Scripture Text Book,' and is published by the Dublin Christian Knowledge Society. It is full of beautiful helps to the teacher, and I use it almost every day.

One word more in this Introduction. I have assumed that the teacher has taken pains in the preparation of a lesson ; now let me add, keep all your notes of lessons, and do not destroy them after the lesson has been delivered. I have some which I used many years ago, and they do duty still, enlarged of course and enriched by subsequent experience and fresh reading.

CHAPTER II.

ON PROGRESSIVE TEACHING.

1. **How to Teach Little Children.**—*Teach both Eye and Ear.*—Obviously the teacher must at once direct his attention to making his lesson attractive. Of the Great Teacher we are told that ‘the common people heard Him gladly,’ ‘all the people were very attentive to hear Him.’ And they who desire to follow His steps, and to make known to their fellows what the will of the Lord is, must take diligent heed to make their teaching a delight. The sympathies of the children must be awakened, their highest faculties appealed to. Perhaps the time is gone by, such as the great satirist of our times describes, when children were made to ‘read genealogies from Nehemiah’ by way of penance ; but there will still be room for improvement so long as the affections and sympathies of children are latent during the Bible lesson. Those who cannot read with fluency must be taught by pictures. We perhaps all of us remember with delight the great picture Bible at home ; how we conned over and over the history which the picture was supposed to illustrate. Very often the pictures were poor enough. I have just been looking at two books dear to me through all the years that have come between those early days and these, Brown’s folio Bible and Fleetwood’s ‘Life of Christ ;’ and though now I see that the pictures are very inferior to those which are produced at the present day, they answered their purpose in making me love the narrative. I have also here ‘The Pictorial Bible,’ in the illustrations of which much light is thrown

upon the archæology of the Bible ; and yet I doubt whether the old-fashioned pictures, with their bad perspective and incorrect architecture, were any whit inferior. There is a human interest about them. At a glance they tell their own story, and the memory of it abides.

The Pictures.—The teacher will find abundant materials out of which to choose his pictures. I have before me three different sets—‘The Bible Picture Book,’ published by the S.P.C.K.; a set published by the Religious Tract Society; and ‘Cottage Pictures from the Old Testament,’ published by J. H. Parker. It would be useless to write lessons on these for this volume ; but I have in each case tried to put myself in the position of the teacher by setting these books on the table in front of me, and studying the pictures one by one. Here, for example, I open the Tract Society’s collection at random, and find ‘The Little Captive Maid (2 Kings v. 1–3).’ There would be no need to go beyond the three verses to find an excellent lesson for little children from this picture. Speak of Naaman, the rich and powerful soldier, with a great misery in his life—he was a leper. Then of the little maid carried off as a slave in one of the forays which were always going on between the warring countries. Her lot was hard enough, to be violently carried off from home and friends; but she remembered fondly the home she had left, and she earnestly desired to be useful to her master. Here she is in the picture, waiting on her grand heathen mistress, and pointing upwards with her finger, as if telling of the power of her God to heal her master; while the mistress is looking on with eager and absorbed gaze, and evidently with growing hope. If the teacher has a copy of Keble’s ‘Lyra Innocentium,’ he will find a beautiful poem on this incident, which might be read or paraphrased to the class. The lessons will be—(1) Faithfulness to God and the Church wherever you are placed ; (2) Desire to do your duty to those about you ; (3) There are none so poor or insignificant but they may do great good.

The little captive maid was enabled to be the means of delivering her master from a horrible disease.

So one might go on with the whole series, the great principles being—(1) Study your picture well, see what points can be made out of the details of it ; (2) Study the passage of Scripture too, and master the facts ; and (3) Make up your own mind what lessons you can fix in the children's minds and send them home with. I can say for myself that I make a rule with myself, in every sermon I preach, to ask, 'What will remain here in the minds of the hearers ?' If there is little worth remembering, or little put so that it can be remembered, the sermon is faulty, and wants rewriting. Let your lesson, then, be complete in itself, and let it contain that which shall remain engraven on the very hearts of your hearers.

2. Other Methods of Teaching.—But let us take the case of young children somewhat more advanced. Instead of taking a picture of some particular incident or story from Holy Scripture, and drawing spiritual and moral instruction from it, the teacher may reverse the manner of his teaching thus: he may take some vice or virtue, and illustrate it by Scriptural examples. There is a great effect and freshness in such teaching, and children are always much interested by it. In fact, it is not good as a rule to speak of vices or virtues in the abstract. They should always be connected with living examples. Thus, suppose the subject be 'Liberality.' I first look it out in the 'Aids,' under 'Names and Subjects,' and find certain texts commending it—Prov. xi. 25 ; Is. xxxii. 8 ; 2 Cor. ix. 13 ; Deut. xv. 14. Then I would bring before the children such exemplifications as are given in Exodus xxxvi. 2-6 ; Num. vii. 2 ; Ruth ii. 16 ; 2 Sam. ix. 7-10, xvii. 28, xxiv. 22, xxix. ; 2 Kings iv. 8-10 ; 2 Chron. xxiv. 10, 11 ; Neh. vii 70-73 ; Job xxix. 15, 16. They will be sure to remember lessons of this sort.

I will give an extended list of subjects for such lessons,

making use of an excellent little book, which I have already named, published by the Dublin Christian Knowledge Society for sixpence, 'The Scripture Text Book.' I have had it on my table for many years, and find it invaluable for sermon writing. It would occupy too much space to quote texts inculcating the particular virtue or forbidding the particular sin which it is proposed to make the subject of the lesson, though the reader will find such in his 'Aids.' But the following references give the practical illustrations:—

Afflictions made Beneficial.—Joseph's brethren, Gen. xlii. 21; Joseph, Gen. xlv. 5-8; Israel, Deut. viii. 3-5; Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 19; Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, 26; Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12; the Psalmist, cxix. 67.

Danger of Evil Company.—Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 1-8; Rehoboam, 1 Kings xii. 8, 9; Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xviii. 3, xix. 2, xx. 35-37; Jehoram, 2 Chron. xxi. 6; Ahaziah, 2 Chron. xxii. 3-5; Israelites, Ezra ix. 1, 2; Ezekiel xlv. 7.

Evil Company Avoided.—The prophet of Bethel, 1 Kings xiii. 7-10; Nehemiah, Neh. vi. 2-4, x. 29-31; The Psalmist, Ps. ci. 4-7, cxix. 115. *Forsaken.*—Israel, Num. xvi. 27; Ezra vi. 21, 22, x. 3, 4, 16, 17; Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings xxii. 49.

Anger, Righteous.—Our Lord, Mark iii. 5; Moses, Ex. xi. 8, xxxii. 19; Lev. x. 16; Num. xvi. 15; Nehemiah, Neh. v. 6, xiii. 17.

Anger, Sinful.—Cain, Gen. iv. 5, 6, Esau, xxvii. 41; Balaam, Num. xxii. 27; Naaman, 2 Kings v. 11; Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 10, Uzziiah, xxvi. 19; Jonah, Jonah iv. 1, 4.

Compassion and Sympathy.—Pharaoh's daughter, Ex. ii. 6; Shobi, 2 Sam. xvii. 27-29; The widow, 1 Kings xvii. 18, 19; Nehemiah, Neh. i. 4; Job's friends, Job ii. 11, xxx. 25; David, Ps. xxxv. 13, 14.

Confession of Sin.—God's promises, Lev. xxvi. 40-42; Prov. xxviii. 13; Aaron, Num. xii. 11, Israel, xxi. 6, 7; 1 Sam. vii. 6, xii. 19; Ezra ix. 6; Neh. i. 6, 7; Dan. ix. 4, 5; David, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.

Covetousness.—Laban, Gen. xxxi. 41; Achan, Josh. vii. 21; Eli's sons, 1 Sam. ii. 12-14, Saul, xv. 9, 19; Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 2 ff.; Gehazi, 2 Kings v. 20-24; Israel, Isaiah i. 23; Jer. li. 13.

Envy.—Cain, Gen. iv. 5, Philistines, xxvi. 14, 15, Laban's sons, xxxi. 1, Joseph's brethren, xxxvii. 11; Saul, 1 Sam. xviii. 8; Sanballat, Neh. ii. 10; Haman, Esth. v. 13; The princes of Babylon, Dan. vi. 3, 4.

Faith.—Caleb, Num. xiii. 30; Job, Job xix. 25; The three children and Daniel, Dan. iii. 17, vi. 10, 23.

Faithfulness.—Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 22, 23; Moses, Num. xii. 7; Samuel, 1 Sam. xii. 3; Daniel, Dan. vi. 4.

Humility.—Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27, Jacob, xxxii. 10; Moses, Ex. iii. 11; Joshua, Josh. vii. 6; David, 1 Chron. xxix. 14; Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 26, Manasseh, xxxiii. 12, Josiah, xxxiv. 27; Job, Job xlii. 6; Isaiah, Isaiah vi. 5.

Justice.—God's promise, Deut. xvi. 20; Moses, Num. xvi. 15; Samuel, 1 Sam. xii. 4; David, 2 Sam. viii. 15; Solomon, 1 Kings iii. 16-28; Josiah, Jer. xxii. 15.

Prayer.—Eliezer, Gen. xxiv. 12, Jacob, xxxii. 9-12; Gideon, Judges vi. 22, 36, 39; Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 10; David, 2 Sam. vii. 18-29; Hezekiah, 2 Kings xix. 14-19, xx. 2; Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19; Ezra, Ezra ix. 5, 6; Nehemiah, Neh. ii. 4; Jeremiah, Jer. xxxii. 16-25; Daniel, Dan. ix. 3, 17; Jonah, Jonah ii. 1.

Intercession.—Abraham, Gen. xviii. 23-32, Abraham's servant, xxiv. 12; Moses, Ex. xxxii. 11-13; Samuel, 1 Sam. vii. 5; Solomon, 1 Kings viii. 30-36, The prophet, xii. 6; Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxx. 18; Daniel, Dan. ix. 3-19.

Answers to Prayer.—Abraham, Gen. xvii. 20, Lot, xix. 21, Abraham's servant, xxiv. 27, Jacob, xxxii. 24-30; Israel, Ex. ii. 23-25, xvii. 4-6, 11-13; Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 27, Samuel, vii. 9; Solomon, 1 Kings iii. 12, Elijah, xviii. 38 [compare James v. 17]; Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 33-35, Jehoahaz, xiii. 4; Jabez, 1 Chron. iv. 10; Asa, 2 Chron. xiv. 11, 12, Jehoshaphat, xx. 6-17, Manasseh,

xxxiii. 13, 19; Ezra, Ezra viii. 21-23; David, Ps. xviii. 6.

Pride.—God's warning, Prov. xxi. 4, viii. 13; Pharaoh, Ex. v. 2; Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25; Moab and Tyre, Isaiah xvi. 6, xxiii. 9; Israel, Hos. v. 5; Jer. xiii. 9, Babylon, 1. 29; Ezek. xxxi. 3, 10, 11; Dan. iv. 30-33, v. 20; Edom, Obad. 3.

Prudence.—Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 3-23, xli. 39; Moses, Ex. xviii. 19; Gideon, Judges viii. 1-3; David, 1 Sam. xvi. 18; Solomon, 1 Kings xii. 7; 2 Chron. ii. 12; Nehemiah, Neh. ii. 12-16, iv. 13-18; God's promises, Prov. xviii. 15, xiv. 15; Hos. xiv. 9.

Resignation to God's Will.—Jacob, Gen. xliii. 14; Aaron, Lev. x. 3; Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 18; David, 2 Sam. xii. 23; Job, Job ii. 10.

Scorners and Mockers.—God's warnings, Prov. i. 22, iii. 34, xxiv. 9; Israel, 2 Chron. xxx. 10, xxxvi. 16; Sanballat, Neh. iv. 1; David's enemies, Ps. xxxv. 15, 16; Jehoia-kim, Jer. xxxvi. 23, 24.

Self-Denial.—Abraham, Gen. xiii. 9 [Heb. xi. 8, 9]; Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 12-15; Esther, Esth. iv. 16; Rechabites, Jer. xxxv. 6, 7.

Slandering and Talcbearing.—God's warnings, Prov. vi. 16, 19; Lev. xix. 16; Ps. xv. 3, lii. 2; Prov. xi. 9; Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 13; Israel's enemies, Ezra iv. 7-16; Neh. vi. 6; Haman, Esth. iii. 8; The evil princes, Jer. xxxviii. 4; Dan. iii. 8, vi. 13.

Steadfastness.—Caleb, Num. xiv. 24; Joshua, Josh. xxiv. 15; Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 2; Job, Job ii. 3; David, Ps. xviii. 21, 22; The three children and Daniel, Dan. iii. 18, vi. 10.

3. What to Teach the Elder Classes and how to Teach it.—As soon as children can read, the teacher has an opportunity of giving both a fuller and a more systematic course of instruction. Chapters should be read through, and lessons be drawn from separate lives. It would lead to

desultoriness and want of any thorough knowledge to go merely from passage to passage. The teacher may depend on his class being thoroughly interested if he will take them with spirit through the history of any one of the Old Testament heroes. Then not merely isolated lives, and the lessons to be drawn from them, should be brought before the children, but the Old Testament as a whole. And the systematic teaching of the Old Testament resolves itself into two main points. *Firstly*, the Old Testament is God's interpretation of all history. And, *secondly*, it is the record of His preparation of the world for the coming of Christ. We shall treat of these at length hereafter, but let us speak of them at first in connexion with the younger classes of readers. Now, one scheme of instruction, combining both subjects, the teacher has ready to his hand, and he will find it a very excellent one with which to begin a systematic Bible course. I mean the Sunday Lessons of the Church. Let us take first the case of a Sunday-school teacher who is carefully considering the subject of the Church seasons. We open the Lesson table of the Book of Common Prayer, and turn to Septuagesima. The name 'Septuagesima,' meaning 'seventieth,' at once turns our thoughts to Easter. It is, in round numbers, the seventieth day before Easter. It is, therefore, the warning note of Lent. Now how do the Lessons bear on this? The Septuagesima Lessons begin the Old Testament; they tell what the world was before the Fall of Man. On the following Sunday we have the history of the Fall, and we go on through Lent with the history of the world's sin, of Israel's bondage, of God's promise of deliverance. I make bold to say that every teacher who will think at all will be able to show children how this represents the state of the world, and of each man and woman in the world, held in bondage by sin, and looking for deliverance through Christ. Easter brings the account of the Passover, and of Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea. The Easter Canticle gives the Christian interpretation of this: 'Christ our

Passover is sacrificed for us ;' and the hymns which are sung in the service are full of allusions to the great victory of the ancient Church (e.g. 'Church Hymns,' 128, 135, 137, 138 ; 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' 110, 111, 112, 113). The Lessons which follow carry on the history of the ancient Church of God from Egypt to Canaan, and the teacher may show how they correspond to the struggles of the Church as displayed in the Acts of the Apostles, in which God's purpose is carried out in spite of the Church's shortcomings. The analogies between the appointment of the Jewish priesthood and the Christian ministry, as contained in the first Lessons for the first and second Sundays after Easter, and the Epistles and Gospels, will be readily seen by the painstaking teacher. In fact, the whole of these Lessons are full of types of the risen life of Christ—the brazen serpent, the song at the well, &c.

After Trinity we have a selection, which has been most carefully made, opening the great features of the history of the chosen people, their establishment in Canaan, the rise of the monarchy, its division, the fortunes of the two kingdoms, the captivity, the restoration.

But let not the teacher forget that, along with the historical facts, he has ever that other need to bear in mind, the drawing forth of spiritual truth. Let us suppose, for example, I were reading with my class the first Lesson for next Sunday evening, which is the first chapter of Ruth. There is its position in the history of the nation, the connexion between the days of the Judges and the history of David (see chap. iv. 17). But I should be very sorry also to omit other considerations. If I were going to take this Lesson, I should first of all explain any hard words, and say a little upon the geography, pointing out Bethlehem-judah and the land of Moab on the map. This, however, should be done rapidly, with a view of getting to the more important points—the purity and happiness of the homes of Mahlon and Chilion, which caused their widows to love and revere

their memory, and to reverence their God ; the noble unselfishness of Naomi, who was willing to live a lonely life henceforward rather than darken the future of her daughters-in-law ; and the beautiful piety of Ruth, who felt the inward conviction that the God of Naomi and of her husband must be the true God, that their love and goodness to her proved it, and so she would give up all rather than forsake one who had been so good to her, and who had nobody else left in the world. I see that my own noted Bible has marginal references at this chapter to Isaac Williams's 'Female Characters of Holy Scripture,' to a tract on 'Ruth' by the S.P.C.K., and to a sermon by the late Rev. C. F. Secretan, 'Ruth, the Good Daughter.'

These are all simple lessons ; but how much better and happier the world as we know it would be if such lessons were more often laid to heart ! The teacher, endeavouring with godly zeal and love to inculcate them, may with good confidence hope that his words will not return to him void, but by the blessing of God will remain in his hearers' hearts and bring forth fruit unto life eternal.

CHAPTER III.

**THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINE INTERPRETATION
OF HISTORY.**

As this is not a Book of Lessons, but a Book for the teacher to read for himself, I shall in the present chapter say somewhat on the subject of the Bible considered as the teacher of true historical principles. The teacher in other departments of his work has to do with history. The Bible offers him principles by which he can examine and judge of the history of nations and men. And, having so examined and judged, he will be able to convey the lessons he has learned even to minds of tender years.

History is the highest and noblest of all sciences. It is also one of the most difficult. Man lived history. It is a record of himself. 'Each new fact in each man's life,' says a profound thinker, 'flashes a light on what great bodies of men have done, and the crises of his life reflect crises of nations.'

It will hardly be necessary to tell my readers that history is not a mere collection of names and dates. It should enable us to see men themselves as they lived in the past, their thoughts, hopes, struggles, sorrows, joys. Then it becomes of all studies the most valuable, far higher than any other, for the purposes of moral instruction. We have already said that the heart is more easily moved by incident than by abstract propositions. In other sciences we learn facts and principles, in history we see men—we see life. Great deeds are done by beings like ourselves, and the

heroes of the past leave to all who follow after them the legacy of their bright example. Without discussing at any length the various theories of history which have been put forth by philosophers, we may assert three propositions :—

1. History shows us how powerful nature has been to affect the welfare and destinies of man.

2. It shows us also how man has been able to control and modify the powers of nature.

3. And it shows how God, the Creator of all things, has laid His hand upon them both, and still controls them.

Take the first of these. We all know how climate, food, soil, affect man. To a great extent they cause the differences which characterise the inhabitants of the earth, differences of size, form, feature, of habits and customs, even of morals and religion. They prompt emigration, indicate the employments of the people, fix the localities of cities.

But this only accounts for a portion of what we see in the world. Man is not a mere creature of circumstances; he would not be man else, he would be no better than a tree or a stone. Let him be placed where he will, he at once asserts his lordship over nature by bidding it serve his ends. And this brings us to our third proposition. He who asserts His lordship over man by declaring that the earth is His and He made it, is God. As a wise German philosopher¹ writes, 'Without the knowledge that there is a God regulating the course of human destiny by His all-ruling Providence, by His saving and redeeming power, the history of the world would be a labyrinth without an outlet—a confused pile of ages buried upon ages—a mighty tragedy without a right beginning or a right ending.'

I believe that the more the Bible is studied, the more what has been stated will be found its philosophy of history. It is expressed in the words, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' Man placed in the earth to replenish that

¹ Schlegel.

earth and subdue it, and God guiding him with the end always in view of restoring him to his original perfection in the world to come.

Let us see what is God's method of interpretation. The Bible gives no elaborate chronology or annals of the nations of the world. There are, it is true, occasional notices of the progress of other nations, but they are incidental to the one great purpose of God's progressive revelation of Himself to fallen man. From the first we never lose sight of the Church in which He set up His witness of Himself, as a means to enlighten the whole world. That Church was at first consecrated in a single family, gradually it widened into a nation. We see indeed continually God-fearing men outside that Church, proofs that His light was enlightening them also ; but the visible tokens of His presence were with the chosen race until the fulness of the time was come. That chosen nation was God's instrument by which He proved His lordship over all the nations. Even as Christ raised Lazarus from the dead to prove Himself the Resurrection and the Life of the world, so God wrought miracles and signs in Israel as visible tokens that He guides all nations and is Lord of their destinies. It is written in the Psalm, 'He made a covenant with Jacob and gave Israel a law which He commanded our forefathers to teach their children' (Ps. lxxviii. 5). We—reading this in the light of the New Testament, remembering that *we* are 'no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God (Eph. ii. 19)—we are able—nay, we are bound—to adopt the Psalmist's words to ourselves, and to say, 'He made a covenant with England and He gave England a law.' And we look upon the history of France, or Germany, or Russia, and we find in the Old Testament how God would have us judge of such a history, that there is no kingdom or nation on earth which He sees not, and claims not as His own. Everywhere, as of old, He 'loveth righteousness and hateth

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iniquity' (Ps. xlv. 7); 'is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and by no means clearing the guilty' (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7). The history of Israel gives the interpretation to all history, and a man reads the annals of that nation as given in the Old Testament to little purpose who does not see, by their help, the hand of God laid upon all nations.

CHAPTER IV.

A SYSTEMATIC VIEW OF THE BIBLICAL HISTORY.

§ 1. THE CHURCH OF THE PATRIARCHS.

THE teacher has had already set before him a slight summary of the Old Testament History, as it may be given to young children, founded mainly upon the Sunday Proper Lessons. I shall endeavour in the present chapter to give a fuller and more detailed scheme of the history of the Church of God from the beginning, as the Bible brings it before us. The Biblical history of the Creation is the history of the beginning of the earth *considered as the abode of man*. Man is described to us in his original state, the state in which God was well pleased with him; then we have the fall and expulsion from Paradise (i.-iii.). The descendants of Cain developed a premature and corrupt civilisation; the children of Seth called themselves by the name of the Lord (Gen. iv. 26, *margin*), *i.e.* they acknowledged the Lord as their God in contrast with the rest of the world. Here then we have *the Visible Church*.

This Church continues, but is corrupted by mingling with the world (v., vi. 1-8). God's judgment falls on it, but the Church is preserved in the family of Noah; he offers sacrifice on coming forth from the ark, and God renews His covenant with him.

Then we have notices of the rise of the great nations of the world (Gen. x.) ; and in the history of Babel we see an attempt at a godless unity, an attempt renewed in succeed-

ing ages in the world's history, and each attempt in turn brought to confusion. The progress of the Church of God continues in the family of Shem, and the call of Abraham is the beginning of an organised polity, more full and definite than we have had before. But a sign that God's kingdom is not confined to one family, but is wide as the world, is seen in Melchizedek, King of Salem (and therefore in all probability a Jebusite), and priest of the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth (Gen. xiv. 18-24).

In the solemn renewal of the covenant with Abraham, God's revelation is clearer than that to Noah. He opens to the Patriarch a vision of the future, as yet indeed but slight, yet fuller than has yet been made known (Gen. xv.)

Abraham's obedience to God's command to offer up Isaac was the culminating point of his faith and trust. It completed his self-surrender to God (Gen. xxii.). Compare with it Hebrews xi. 17-19. On the death of his wife, his unflinching trust in the fulfilment of God's promise is seen in his refusal to mingle her dust with that of the people around. She shall be buried, and he with her, apart and alone. The blessing to the whole world shall come by the Church refusing to conform to the world.

The covenant with Abraham was renewed to Isaac, but his name does not come very prominently before us. In the days of Jacob and his sons we are brought into view of the ancient monarchy of Egypt. Of that monarchy, too, God reveals Himself the Lord and King, guiding it in His love and care, yet always keeping the Church distinct and apart from its idolatries. The Church and covenant are no longer confined to one man, as in the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for all Jacob's sons are recognised as the people of the Lord, and called by the distinctive name of Israel. In the contest between Moses as the representative of His people and Pharaoh the opposer and blasphemer of the Lord, we have a figure of the great battle between Light and Darkness which the history of the Church still presents.

In the wilderness we have the delivering of the written law, the establishment of a priesthood for the vicarious offering of sacrifice, and of a visible mercy-seat in a Tabernacle where God especially promised to be found of His people. The Tabernacle was carried about with the moving host in the wilderness, and on the settlement of the nation in Canaan was set up in Shiloh.

The period between the exodus and the entry into Canaan falls into four distinct periods :—

(a) The march to Sinai and encampment there (Ex. xv.—Num. x. 32).

(b) The advance toward Canaan (Num. x. 33—xiv.).

(c) The retreat and thirty-eight years' wandering (Num. xv.—xix.).

(d) The final advance to the Jordan (Num. xx., xxi.).

Of the period of the forty years' wandering we know almost nothing ; there are a few episodes of deep interest, such as the rebellion of Korah (Num. xvi.) and the history of Balaam (Num. xxii.—xxiv., xxxi. 1–8). But we see that all these long years Moses was patiently organising the people under the direction of God, so that whereas they were little better than a horde of savages when they left Egypt, they were marshalled and arranged in regular order when they drew near to the Jordan.

The conquest of Canaan is narrated in the Book of Joshua. The kings of the south were defeated at the battle of Makkedah, and of the north at the waters of Merom (ch. i.—xii.). Then the land was divided among the tribes (xiii.—xxii.); after which Joshua, having convened the tribes, solemnly charged them to remember that they held the land as tenants under God. Then he died in peace, with the promise from them that they would follow his exhortations.

In the period covered by the Book of Judges we see the nation in its early days often giving itself to violence and sin, but never losing the witness of God which had been committed to it. The tribes were sometimes at war, not

merely with foreign enemies but with one another. The war with Jabin marks the last attempt of the old inhabitants to repossess themselves of the country; after that time we hear little more of them. The last remnant, the Jebusites, were dispossessed of Jerusalem by David (2 Sam. v.).

As the country became more settled, there was an evident tendency to monarchy. Moses had anticipated and provided for this (Deut. xvii. 14-end). Abimelech's attempt, for a while successful, marks this tendency. But it failed partly through the godless character of the man and his attempt, partly from its prematureness. But by the time the Book of Samuel opens, unity was so far attained that Eli the priest was also judge of the whole people, and the same office was filled by Samuel.

§ 2. THE CHURCH UNDER THE MONARCHY.

The song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, is a song of the coming monarchy (1 Sam. ii. 1-10). It clearly regards that monarchy as on its way, and for the first time speaks of God as 'the Lord of hosts.' The First Book of Samuel is therefore sometimes called also truly 'the First Book of the Kings.' The orderly rule of Samuel and his rescue of the nation from ruin after the fall of Shiloh made the people more eager than ever for a king in order to preserve their unity. They sinned indeed in not referring the matter to God, in forgetting that He was the true Lord of the nation; but He announced that He would grant their wish, yet all the while would rule them Himself. So the monarchy began, and with it began also the period of the prophets. Moses, as we know, had been a prophet; but with Samuel began a regular prophetic order, and we begin to read of 'the sons of the prophets' (1 Sam. x. 10, &c.). Thus we see that the prophetic order was established side by side with the royal, and the student will find constantly that

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the prophet was the Divine check against tyranny and wrong on the part of the king.

The teacher must remember that now we begin to have two, and sometimes more, portions of the Bible running side by side. We have the continuous narrative in the Books of Samuel and Kings, and from the death of Saul we have also the Books of Chronicles. But also we have the Book of Psalms to illustrate the history of David. The teacher will find it always an interesting subject with his pupils, when reading the history of David, to illustrate continually from the Psalms.

A contrast to the great empires of antiquity, where a man built a strong city and then proceeded to tyrannise over and enslave his fellow-men around, was the history of Jerusalem. The people of Israel emerged from slavery to be a race of freemen. Their education was carried on in the wilderness, and in the fields and pastures of Palestine, until they became an orderly nation and kingdom. Then, and not until then, David took Jerusalem as the centre and citadel of that free kingdom, and set up the ark of God in the midst, the sign that God was the Ruler and King of the people. And then we have his desire to build a temple, not (it is true) granted to him, but recognised and blessed by God, who opens to him a vision of the greatness of the kingdom of David which shall be established for ever (2 Sam. vii.).

§ 3. THE CHURCH OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM.

The teacher will find a very valuable table of the kings of the two kingdoms in the 'Aids to Bible Students,' p. 115. This table also contains notices of the contemporary history of the world. I add here to what the reader will find in that table the passages of Holy Scripture, where the histories of the respective kings will be found.

- B. C.
 977. Rehoboam, 1 Kings xii. 1-24, xiv. 21-31; 2 Chron. x.-xii.
 959. Abijam, 1 Kings xv. 1-8; 2 Chron. xiii.
 956. Asa, 1 Kings xv. 8-24; 2 Chron. xiv.-xvi.
 916. Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii.-xx.; 1 Kings xxii. 41-49.
 892. Jehoram, 2 Chron. xxi.
 885. Ahaziah, 2 Chron. xxii. 1-10.
 884. Athaliah, 2 Kings xi.; 2 Chron. xxii. 10, xxiii. 1-15.
 878. Joash, 2 Kings xii.; 2 Chron. xxiv.
 838. Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv. 1-20; 2 Chron. xxv.
 809. Uzziah or Azariah, 2 Kings xv. 1-7; 2 Chron. xxvi.; Joel.
 757. Jotham, 2 Kings xv. 32-38; 2 Chron. xxvii.; Micah.
 742. Ahaz, 2 Kings xvi.; 2 Chron. xxviii.; Isaiah vii., viii.
 726. Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix.-xxxii.; Isaiah ix.-xxxix.
- B. C.
 977. Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 20-xiv. 20.
 956. Nadab, 1 Kings xv. 25-31.
 954. Baasha, 1 Kings xv. 27-xvi. 7.
 932. Elah, 1 Kings xvi. 8-10.
 931. Zimri, 1 Kings xvi. 9-20.
 929. Omri, 1 Kings xvi. 21-28.
 918. Ahab, 1 Kings xvi. 29, xxii. 40.
 897. Ahaziah, 1 Kings xxii. 51-end; 2 Kings i.
 896. Jehoram, 2 Kings ii.-ix. 26.
 884. Jehu, 2 Kings ix., x.
 856. Jehoahaz, 2 Kings xiii. 1-9.
 839. Jehoash, 2 Kings xiii. 10-xiv. 16.
 823. Jeroboam, ii.; 2 Kings xiv. 23-29; Amos; Hosea. Interruption of ten years.
 772. Zechariah, 2 Kings xv. 8-12.
 771. Shallum, 2 Kings xv. 13-15.
 771. Menahem, 2 Kings xv. 15-22.
 760. Pekahiah, 2 Kings xv. 23-26.
 758. Pekah, 2 Kings xv. 27-31.
 730. Hoshea, 2 Kings xvii.

B.C.

697. Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii.

1-20.

642. Amon, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21-
end.640. Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxiv.,
xxxv.; 2 Kings xxiii. 1-30;
Habakkuk.609. Jehoahaz, 2 Kings xxiii. 30-
34; Jer. xxii. 11, 12.609. Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiii.
34, xxiv. 1-6; 2 Chron.
xxxvi. 5-8598. Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv.
8-16, xxv. 27-30; Jer.
xxii. 24-30.597. Zedekiah, 2 Kings xxiv. 17-
end, xxv. 1-21.

The teacher will observe at a glance that the kings of Judah are much more fully dealt with in the Chronicles than in the Kings, whilst the latter book gives us much fuller information than the former about the northern kingdom—Israel. Closer examination will show why this is so; the Books of Kings may be called a political history, the Books of Chronicles an ecclesiastical and speaking therefore much of the Temple at Jerusalem, which was within the kingdom of Judah. In a nation where the State and Church were so closely united and intertwined, it was indeed a matter of course that each book shall say much concerning both; still the Books of Chronicles, certainly written by one of the tribe of Levi, form the source from which we gain most information concerning the Temple worship and the priesthood during the days of the monarchy. The teacher, therefore, will be able to gather some very beautiful lessons concerning public worship and the ritual of Divine worship from these books.

As the Book of Psalms throws light on the life of David, so do the Books of the Prophets upon the history of the

monarchy. In our blessed Lord's parable of 'The Wicked Husbandmen,' He shows how the prophets were sent to bring the erring nation to obedience to their king (Matt. xxi. 33-41).

There is one point which should not be passed over even in this short treatise. It is the fulness of the prophetic power which was brought to influence the northern kingdom. As if to compensate for the loss of the regular priesthood and Temple, God gave some of the greatest of the prophets to the kingdom of Israel. Elijah and Elisha were almost entirely ministers to that kingdom. We hear of no word of Elijah to Judah, if we except the posthumous letter referred to in 2 Chron. xxi. 12. Jonah had also a mission to the kingdom of Israel, though it is not detailed in Scripture (2 Kings xiv. 25).

§ 4. THE CHURCH IN THE TIME OF THE CAPTIVITY.

The direct historical narrative breaks off with the Book of Kings, and we have to piece it together by means of the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and of the Assyrian and Babylonian history.¹ The following slight table of the events of the seventy years' captivity and the return will, it is hoped, be a help to the teacher :—

- 606. Judah under Jehoiakim made tributary by Nebuchadnezzar. Many Jews, chiefly of the richer classes, carried to Babylon ; among them Ezekiel, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael. (2 Kings xxiv. 1-4 ; Dan. i. These passages should also be read ; Jeremiah xxvi., xxvii. 1-11, xxxv., xxxvi.)
- 598. Jehoiachin reigns three months. Jerusalem taken by the Chaldeans. Jehoiachin in exile. (Jeremiah xxii. 1-10.)
- 597. Zedekiah reigns as vassal of the Chaldeans for eleven years. (2 Kings xxiv. 17-20.)

¹ There is a very good sketch of the history of the great empires in the *Aids*, pp. 96-109—*The Bible and the Monuments*.

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594. Ezekiel receives his call as prophet, by the river of Chebar. (Ezekiel i.) The first twenty-four chapters of this prophet relate to the exiles in Babylon who were carried away at the first deportation. Then he has several chapters concerning foreign nations, xxv.-xxxii.
589. Zedekiah applies to Egypt for help, whereupon the Chaldeans immediately besiege Jerusalem again.
586. Jerusalem is destroyed, and the king taken prisoner. (2 Kings xxv. ; 2 Chron. xxxvi. ; Jer. lii. ; Ezek. xxxiii. 21.) The greater part of the people carried away to Babylon. Jeremiah writes the *Lamentations*. Gedaliah is appointed governor by Nebuchadnezzar, but is killed by Ishmael. Many of the people flee into Egypt, and take Jeremiah with them. (2 Kings xxv. 22-26 ; Jer. xliii.)
581. Ezekiel's vision of the new Temple. (Ez. xl.-xlviii.)
580. Nebuchadnezzar sets up his golden image in the plain of Dura. (Dan. iii.)
570. Nebuchadnezzar's madness. (Dan. iv. 22, 27, 29, 33.)
564. His recovery.
562. His death. Accession of his son Evil-merodach. Jehoiachin taken out of prison. (2 Kings xxv. 27.)
560. Evil-merodach slain ; succeeded by Nergal-sharezer the Rab-Mag, *i.e.* chief of the Magi (see Jer. xxxix. 3, 13), called Neriglissar in Josephus. He married Nebuchadnezzar's daughter.
556. Nergal-sharezer succeeded by his son Laborosoarchod, a child, who is murdered within a year.
555. Nabonadius succeeds (called by Herodotus, Labynetus). He appears to have married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar. Having associated with himself Belshazzar as joint-king, he marched against Cyrus king of Persia, who was at war with Croesus king of Lydia, leaving Belshazzar in charge of Babylon. Cyrus routed Nabonadius (who thereupon shut himself up in Borsippa) and marched against Babylon.
538. Belshazzar's impious feast, interrupted by God's awful message. Babylon taken by Cyrus, who committed the rule of the city to Darius the Mede. (Dan. v.)
538. Daniel cast into the lions' den. (Dan. vi.)
536. Death of Darius. Cyrus ruler at Babylon. His decree restoring the Jews, an answer to Daniel's prayer. (Dan. ix.)

§ 5. THE CHURCH FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE END
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

536. Return of the exiles from Jerusalem under Zerubbabel. (Ezra i-iii. ; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.) The rebuilding of the Temple begins.
529. Cyrus dies, and is succeeded by his son Cambyses, called in Ezra iv. 6 Ahasuerus (Persian and Sanskrit name for 'king'). The adversaries of the Church try to stop the building of the Temple. (Ezra iv. 6.)
521. Death of Cambyses. Accession of a Magian impostor who pretended to be the younger son of Cyrus, Smerdis ; called in Ezra iv. 7 Artaxerxes, *i.e.* 'great warrior.' The enemies repeat their attempt, and the Temple works are stopped.
521. The false Smerdis is slain, and succeeded by Darius Hystaspis. (Ezra iv. 24, v., vi.) Under him the Temple works are recommenced.
517. Temple completed. (Ezra vi.)
490. Darius invades Greece ; but is defeated at the great battle of Marathon.
485. Xerxes, who succeeds his father Darius, is the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. A great feast which he gives to his nobles leads to the deposition of Queen Vashti. He invades Greece, but is defeated at the battles of Salamis and Platæa. On his return Esther is made queen.
473. Haman's plot. Institution of the Feast of Purim.
464. Artaxerxes Longimanus succeeds his father Xerxes.
457. Ezra goes up from Babylon, under commission from Artaxerxes, with a large company of Jews. (Ezra vii., viii.) His reformation of religion and manners. (Ezra ix., x.)
444. Nehemiah goes up to Jerusalem, sent by the same king, as Tirshatha, or 'governor.' He repairs the broken walls, notwithstanding the cowardice and sloth of the Jews and the spite of their enemies. (Neh. i.-vii.) Solemn assembly of the people, and high festival. The covenant renewed. (Neh. viii.-xii.) His reformation.
430. With the prophet Malachi the Old Testament Scriptures close.

§ 6. THE CHURCH FROM THE CLOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES UNTIL THE COMING OF CHRIST.

This division of the history of the ancient Church of God does not fall strictly within the history of the Old Testament. We gather it partly from the writings of Josephus, partly from the Apocrypha, partly from profane authors. All that can be done here is to name the principal epochs.

The Jews continued under the rule of Persia as long as that monarchy lasted. The Samaritans being refused communion with them, Manasseh built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim, B.C. 409.

In B.C. 333, Alexander the Great, king of Macedon, conquered the Persian king Darius, and the Persian monarchy was at an end. This event was the means of spreading the Greek literature and language all through the East, and thus a great help was prepared for the spread of the Gospel. He founded the city of Alexandria, and under his sanction great multitudes of Jews took up their abode there. In after years, when many of them had forgotten their native tongue, the Old Testament was translated into Greek for their use ; this is the translation called the *Septuagint*. When Alexander died, in 323, his conquests were divided between four generals. Palestine lay between the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt, and became a battle-field of these rival kingdoms, being seized again and again, first by one power, then by the other.

The tyranny and cruelties of Antiochus Epiphanes, who became king of Syria B.C. 175, led to the rising of the Jews under the brave Maccabees, and Palestine again became independent B.C. 141, about the time when Rome, by the destruction of her rival Carthage and the conquest of Corinth, was consolidating her colossal power round the Mediterranean Sea. Thus began, at Jerusalem, the dynasty

of the Asmonæans. It lasted till B.C. 70, in which year a dispute between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, the great-grandsons of Simon the brother of Judas Maccabæus, led them to appeal to the Roman general Pompey, who had been achieving great victories in the East. He came and made Judæa subject to the Roman power. Then came the civil wars of Rome, and at the battle of Philippi, B.C. 41, the Republic was overthrown, and the Empire took its place under Augustus Cæsar. Two years before, Herod, an Edomite, had succeeded in persuading the Romans to make him king of Judea. During his reign, and under the Empire of Augustus, our Blessed Saviour was born.

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD TESTAMENT CONSIDERED AS THE
PREPARATION FOR CHRIST.

I HAVE spoken of the Bible as the interpreter of history ; I turn now to a subject never to be lost sight of by the teacher. We are told (to quote the Revised Version) in Heb. i. 1 that God spake of old 'unto the fathers in the prophets, by divers portions and in divers manners.' Always, as the New Testament teaches us, the eternal purpose of God was before Him in the revelation of the Old Testament, of gathering together all things in Christ. The revelation was 'by divers portions,' it was not given all at once. The light became clearer as the world moved on. Of the 'divers manners,' too, we shall see as we read. But though the revelation was progressive, there is enough to show us the unchanging character of God's purpose from the beginning.

1. **Sacrifice.**—Let us start with these words from Rev. xiii. 8, 'The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' Before Adam sinned, the Lamb had been slain in the eternal counsels of God. It was no afterthought following that sin ; it was an essential part of the very nature and character of God. Here we stand to-day between two eternities. We look back upon the past, and that is all mystery : the eternal existence of God, the mutual love of the Father and the Son. We look into the future, and see ourselves in the great eternity, and all is solemn mystery there. And between them the unspeakable Love has placed us to adore

and believe ; to believe that there is and has ever been, by some Divine necessity beyond our comprehension, a combination of sacrifice and power. This serves to explain the fact that wherever we meet with any sort of religion in the wide world, there is sure to be sacrifice in some form. The miserable and ghastly form which it takes among the African tribes, who slay their fellow-creatures before their idols, is a caricature proving that there must have been a true form of sacrifice at first which came down from heaven. The false forms are found in heathen religions ; the true in Holy Scripture.

2. **Abel's Sacrifice.**—The first direct mention of sacrifice is that of the sons of Adam (Gen. iv.). Cain's offering was rejected ; Abel's was accepted. Whether the difference lay in the characters of the two men, or in the nature of their offering, we are not told ; but as one reads the rest of the Bible it seems almost clear that it was, in part at least, the second of the two. The brothers stood in a world which had been polluted by sin, but which had also received a covenant of deliverance. *We* know that this covenant rested on the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, though not yet revealed to the world. Their lives, like the life of every man born into the world, lay in the redemption by Christ. This was the law of their existence, and therefore must be the basis of their worship. The sacrifice of Abel's lamb was an expression of this ; the offering of fruits was not. The one, but not the other, imaged the Divine Sufferer. From the first the lamb was the standing symbol and type of the Redeemer.

There is much that is fearful about the history of the Fall,—God's righteous anger—man driven from Eden—a threatening glare upon his path from the flaming sword behind him. But a figure comes between. The shadow of the slain Lamb falls along the lengthening way ; and in that shadow man crosses the wilderness of this world to a nobler Eden than he leaves.

3. **Extension of the Law of Sacrifice.**—The teacher studying the records of God's revelation of Himself will not fail to note how, whenever He renewed, or extended, or enlarged His covenant with the patriarchs, there was always some extension of the law of sacrifice. Thus, after the Flood, when He renewed His covenant with Noah, we are told that Noah offered of every clean beast and of every clean fowl. So when God promised Abraham the land of Canaan, there was a special solemn sacrifice (Gen. xv.).

4. **The Significance of the Sacrifice of Isaac.**—The great chapter which relates the sacrifice of Isaac stands midway in the world's history between the sacrifice of Abel and those appointed under Moses—midway in meaning, midway in time. For the sacrifice of Abel expressed the ground of man's hope, the slain Lamb; but did not *explain*. Abel brought the firstling of his flock, and was accepted for his obedience and trust; and that was all. But in the case of Abraham and his son we have the very image of the great Offering to come.¹ The well-beloved son, the representative of the whole race, is voluntarily offered by the father,—voluntarily offers himself. 'They went both of them together,' as we are told twice (verses 6 and 8); one in purpose, one in mind. The father binds the son; the son unresistingly suffers himself to be bound. The type is complete. No type afterwards added anything to the fulness of this sublime prophecy-in-action. The sacrifices of Moses taught the people more concerning the *benefits* of sacrifice, gave fuller information on details; but the truth itself that the Lamb was slain from all eternity was never more fully foreshadowed and exemplified than in the sacrifice of Isaac.

We may, I believe, put it this way. In Isaac, Abraham saw the day of Christ (John viii. 56). Moses showed how the sacrifice of Christ would be applied. Just as in the New Testament the Gospels tell us how Christ died, and the

¹ The chapter is one of the Proper Lessons for Good Friday.

Epistles tell how the sacrifice is applied to the heart and the conscience ; each has its work, and one completes the other.

Space would fail me in trying to bring before the teacher all the points of this Divine history ; I can only just indicate some. (1) Abraham learned that his sacrifice would of itself not avail ; it would not have satisfied his craving to serve God. He learned that all human sacrifice could be only typical. *Man* could provide no fitting offering, and therefore the Lord provided. (2) Isaac looked round for a victim. There was none. (Cf. Is. lxiii. 5.) (3) They went together and alone ; the servants could not enter. No mortal can enter into the secret work of the Father and the Son. (Cf. John xvi. 32 ; Is. lxiii. 3.) (4) Compare Gen. xxii. 6 with John xx. 17. (5) Read the commentary supplied by Heb. xi. 17-19.

5. **The Paschal Lamb.**—The sacred history plainly indicates all through the Book of Genesis that it is moving steadily to a 'far-off great event.' The whole tenor of the promises bade the receivers look forward. The captivity in Egypt marks an epoch in the history of the Church. It was not only a type of the battle of the Church with sin, but it was a preparation of the family to become a nation. When the time came for the development of this nation by their leaving the land of bondage, the great sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb was ordained. That was not only a sacrifice, it was also a feast ; not only a type of the offering of Christ, but the beginning of a new state of things. The lamb, after being slain, was eaten. No part was burnt on an altar. Only that which the worshippers could not eat was to be burnt with fire. The animal was to be dressed whole, not even a bone was to be broken. There is (if one may say so) a lavish abundance of emphasis in the way that all this is laid down, all indicating a truth so precious that words are too weak to express it, viz. that in His Covenant of Redemption God gives us in Christ His best, and gives It all. He keeps nothing back, and it is all for us. It is not merely

a propitiation for guilt, it is an eternal life and joy. Our redeemed human nature partakes of the whole nature of the Incarnate God.

And when we read the discourses of our Lord in St. John xiii.-xvi., with these ideas in mind, the history of the Passover throws light upon them which was not there before. Those discourses are the Divine interpretation of the central act of the Old Testament, out of which arose the central act of the New. The Passover of the Christian Church was the death and the rising again of the ancient rite. The typical Passover vanished; but the Christian Eucharist arose at the same instant, and its forms still gave forth the same lesson which the forms of the elder rite had taught, but spiritualised and glorified like Ezekiel's temple.

The sacrifice was all for the benefit of those who were taught to offer it. The Body and Blood are given for us. 'Take this and divide it among yourselves,' Christ says of the blood which is the life.

But above all, let us again recur to the great fact that this last Passover shows so clearly that the doctrine of Communion was a main constituent in the teaching of the Paschal feast. We have seen already how sacrifice and covenant go together, how all through God's teachings it was shown that human life is *redeemed* life. Traced upwards to its final source we see this redeemed life issuing from the throne of God, from the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; springing from that sacrifice at first and depending upon it still. We have no existence apart from it. Who does not see this through all the discourses on the Passover night? 'I am the True Vine.' 'Except ye abide in Me ye are nothing.' Whatsoever of divine and supernatural power is expressed by the words 'This is My Blood of the New Testament' *must* be circulating evermore through our redeemed existence. For the whole Church, and for each member of the Church, it is the same—the Sacrifice, and Communion upon the sacrifice, not one without the other;

the sacrifice and the feast make one Passover solemnity. The one without the other is nothing at all, in the two together we have the Gospel. The Jewish Passover and the Christian Eucharist brought all hidden lights into view. The Jewish and the Christian rites joined hands under the shadow of the Cross, both bearing witness to Him of whom each testified. The one vanished away in the very hands of Him who ordained it, but did not vanish without seeing Him hand it on in fairer colours to its newly-found sister. And therefore, when we read in the Old Testament of the great Jewish Passover, we add in our minds with thanksgiving the apostle's joyous comment, 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast.'

6. **The Scapegoat.**—The Paschal Lamb was the greatest type of the Old Covenant. Second to it came that of the Scapegoat, of which a full account will be found in Lev. xvi. Once more let us note at the outset that the ordinances delivered by Moses were not a bundle of forms without coherence; there was a great unity in all that complicated arrangement of ceremonies, and that unity was the Divine Sacrifice. The Lamb slain from eternity meets us at every turn. The prism is many-sided, but the light is one.

What was the further truth conveyed by the scapegoat?

The Passover lamb was the bond of the covenant, the sign of union with God. But the people were continually breaking the covenant. Every act of sin broke it. The scapegoat explains how the breach was to be healed.

On the great *Day of Atonement* (10th Tisri) two goats were chosen, as near as could be of the same size and appearance; one was to be for the Lord, the other for *the scapegoat*. The Hebrew word so rendered is so unusual that the translators felt doubtful of the meaning, and therefore left it in the margin, as will be seen in reference Bibles—'Azazel.'

38 HOW TO TEACH THE OLD TESTAMENT.

It is now agreed by Hebrew scholars that the word 'Azazel' means 'for the complete sending away.'

The first goat was to be slain and burnt as a sin-offering, and the full details of the offering are of deep and solemn interest. The Epistle to the Hebrews, it will be remembered, interprets the high priest's entry into the holiest place with the blood of the slain goat, to be a type of the entry of Christ into the highest heaven with His own blood of Atonement (Heb. ix.). So far all is clear. But the parallel to the work of Christ would not be completed by the death of the slain goat, because Christ not only died but rose again. To prefigure this, the other goat, 'for Azazel,' was brought out alive after the other had been slain, the sins of the people were solemnly laid upon it 'for the complete sending away,' and the goat went away into a land not inhabited. Even so the resurrection of Christ was for our justification, for the complete putting away of sin.

The scapegoat, then, sets forth that under the covenant of redemption, and through the power of sacrifice, the actual sins of men, confessed and repented of, are not allowed to stand between the sinner and God, they are removed completely. Such an institution was necessary because, though men are in covenant with God, they are continually breaking it, till even the covenant itself seems a failure. The scapegoat bears witness in a beautiful figure that the One Sacrifice is continually availing to remove the barriers which sin is always building up in spite of man's redeemed condition. 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin,' and the teaching of the scapegoat is *Repentance* and *Restoration*.

7. The Serpent lifted up.—There is one other Old Testament type of which I must speak at some length, different from the foregoing. Those that we have had have been ordinances in continual and regular order, a witness, year after year, of Him that was to come. But there were also types arising out of accidental circumstances, produced out of those circumstances, and then disappearing altogether.

Two such stand above all others, *the manna* and *the lifting up of the serpent*, both in the wilderness. Of each of these our Lord declared that they were types of Himself (John iii. 14, 15, vi. 32-58). Now, in each case, we have the same principle stated, namely that from Christ Himself proceed the spiritual energies of the regenerate life of those whom He has redeemed. In the one case the leading idea is that of continual support, in the other that of remedy. The manna represents Christ as the spiritual sustenance, renewing the strength of His fainting, struggling people. The uplifted serpent shows us Christ crucified as the spiritual medicine which renews their health. Food and sustenance are not enough. The life and health of the regenerate soul are weakened not only by the natural outgoings of strength which follow all the activities of created life. There are sicknesses of the soul, and wounds which accompany every state of strife and warfare. For the plague and wounds of sin remedies are needed. The circumstances which led to the lifting up of the serpent are familiar to us all. They are recorded in Num. xxi. The people, worn out with long journeying, lost heart, and, from want of trust in Him who had done so much for them, went on to despise the food which He had given them. So it is still. When we forget what God has done for us already, we go on to disbelieve that He is doing anything for us at all. We see no grace in the sacraments, no spiritual energies at work for our guidance. And so we become exposed to the danger of dark unbelief, the true fiery serpent. From the beginning of the Bible to the very end, the serpent is the symbol of the devil, the deceiver and false accuser. The devil is first the false accuser of God. He puts false notions and thoughts of God into our minds, and blinds us to the perception of the actual gifts and graces which are ours from Christ. And so as Israel sinned after the manner of the serpent's temptation, they suffered by the serpent's bite. They charged God with not caring for them, and they had bitterly to

learn what would become of them if God did not care for them, if He let them alone. The deadly wound of the serpent's bite paralyses all spiritual life. And unbelief in our own spiritual privileges destroys all power of action. Then came God's remedy, the most vivid type of Christ's salvation which the history of the wilderness contains. 'Not to condemn the world but to save' was His expression of the object of His mission (John iii. 17). The uplifted serpent was the *Restoration of Trust*. For it represented the power of God to slay the serpent, to destroy his work, to destroy the severance which unbelief had made between God and man by his false accusation. Nay more, it represented that God the Redeemer was already victor over the accuser, was present to heal all who, from whatever cause, had come under the cruel power of the vanquished enemy. The people looked up at the image of sin fastened to the tree, and their trust was restored, and they lived again.

Christ has nailed to His cross all fears and suspicions of God which coward conscience has begotten. And this is the first type in Scripture which sets forth the *manner* of the Sacrifice to which we turn our eyes and live.

The question may still arise, How can the serpent, of all things, be a type of Christ? We can see that the uplifting of the serpent represents the crucifixion, but how can the symbol of the devil be a type of the Saviour? We reply, this type is intended to reveal to us as much as we are able to understand of the manner in which the sacrifice of Christ heals the diseases of our souls. It sets forth the actual doing away of sin which His atonement accomplishes. He who knew no sin 'was made sin for us.' He 'bore our sins in His own body on the tree.' He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, just as that which Moses lifted up was made in the likeness of the destroying serpent. So when the Sinless was crucified, sin was slain, Satan was vanquished, the serpent's head bruised. The sight of the

crucified gives us power to put away our mistrust and doubt and despondency. Christ the Conqueror is Christ the Healer.

8. **Other Types.**—I have thought it well to treat a few of the great types at length, as examples for the teacher. I can only *name* some of the others, leaving him to work them out for himself. Some belong, like most of those we have been considering, to the organised system of Old Testament ordinances. Some arise out of particular circumstances. I do not think I can do better than transcribe the Table of Contents of a charming little book, published by the National Society for sixpence, entitled 'The Types and their Antitypes,' by Lady Mary Herbert. It will be found full of suggestions to the teacher. Perhaps it will be well, however, to say a word of caution here against being too fanciful and making comparisons out of mere accidents. In the case of the types we have named, we have divine sanction for them. So we have for some of those named in this list: *e.g.* as regards Eliakim compare Isaiah xxii. 22 with Rev. iii. 7. But clearly if the teacher speaks of Samson as a type of Christ he should point out also the contrast as well as the difference. In both cases there was the love of the people, the might, and self-sacrifice. But the wilfulness and self-indulgence of the one marred a great work; the perfect holiness of the other completed His work.

PART I.

HOLY MEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT—TYPES OF CHRIST.

Abel	Joshua	Cyrus
Melchizedek	Samson	Eliakim
Isaac	David	Jonah
Joseph	Solomon	Zerubbabel
Moses ; his life	Elijah	Joshua, son of
„ his office	Job	Josedech

PART II.

THE TYPICAL EVENTS OF THE BIBLE.

The Flood	The Taking of Jericho
The Burning Bush	The Scarlet Thread
The Brazen Serpent	The Fall of Babylon
The Cities of Refuge	The Destruction of Jerusalem

PART III.

THE MOSAIC, A TYPE OF THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

The Temple	The Feasts :
The Outer Court	i. Passover
The Altar of Burnt Offering	ii. First Fruits
The Holy Place	iii. Tabernacles
The Most Holy Place	The Great Day of Atonement
The Ark and the Mercy Seat	The Ceremonies
The Veil	The Year of Jubilee
The High Priest	The Sabbath
The Sacrifices	The Holy City

PART IV.

THE TWO SACRAMENTS.

Types of Baptism.

Noah's Ark	The Passage of Jordan
The Red Sea	The Cleansing of Naaman
Circumcision	

Types of Holy Communion.

The Tree of Life	The Springing Rock
The Bread and Wine of Melchizedek	The Shrewbread
The Wheat with which Joseph fed his Brethren	The Barrel of Meal and Cruise of Oil
The Paschal Lamb	The Bread which the Angel brought to Elijah
The Manna	

The journeying of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, typical of the Christian's life in the Church.

And I will quote one specimen from this book, the chapter on the 'High Priest,' as showing how interesting this subject may be made.

‘THE HIGH PRIEST.

‘The High Priest was the type of Christ, our Great High Priest. Heb. iv. 14.

‘1. He was anointed to the Priesthood : Christ is the anointed One. Ex. xxix. 7 ; Acts iv. 27.

‘2. The Priesthood was to continue in the family of Aaron, and his alone : Jesus Christ is an eternal High Priest. Ex. xl. 15 ; Heb. vii. 25.

‘3. The High Priest entered the Most Holy Place within the veil ; our High Priest Christ Jesus is gone up into Heaven. Lev. xvi. 12 ; Heb. viii. 1.

‘4. The High Priest only entered into the Holiest once a year : Christ having *once* made atonement for us entered into Heaven. Ex. xxviii. 35 ; Heb. ix. 7, 11, 12.

‘5. The High Priest made atonement for the people : Christ for us. Lev. xvi. 30 ; Heb. ix. 13, 14.’

Here is one other passage from another work, somewhat more full and elaborate, ‘The Figures and Types of the Old Testament,’ by the Rev. J. R. West (Masters) :—

‘THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD AND OF FIRE.

‘Although as soon as the Israelites had been baptised, God led them into the wilderness of temptation, yet He provided everything needful for their difficult journey.

‘First, He gave them the Pillar of the Cloud and of Fire (Ex. xiii. 21). This was an unerring *guide* which would lead them day by day, and night by night, till they should arrive at the Promised Land. It was also their *guard* for protection, as when the Egyptians were pursuing them. It was their *covering* or *shade* in the daytime, so that the sun could not smite them ; and it was their light in the night season. For in it was the abiding presence of the Lord Himself.

‘And all this is a type of the abiding presence of the Lord with His Church now. For the cloud is one of the emblems of the Holy Spirit, and fire ever denotes divinity. And the pillar of fire was also the overshadowing cloud.

‘The Lord the Holy Ghost is now come down to guide, and to guard, and comfort, and enlighten us, as we travel through the wilderness of this world. And in His abiding presence is the presence also of our Redeemer and Saviour.

‘His holy guidance and godly motions if we humbly follow, He will guide and lead us safely, till we reach His holy habitation in the true felicity of the everlasting Canaan. Then we shall sing a new song of praise with more understanding to Him *who has led His people through the wilderness, for His mercy endureth for ever.*

‘But compare Ex. xxiii. 20, 21, with Eph. iv. 30, and Acts vii. 51.’

But the types are by no means the only method by which God foretold Christ under the Old Testament. In the fullest sense the whole of the Old Testament was prophetic. The chosen people were always bidden to look forward to ‘Him

that should come,' not only in set prophecies, but in God's manifold dealings.

9. **The Jewish Monarchy** is one instance. The setting up of the monarchy would lose its significance if we forgot that it was a leading up to the Kingdom of Christ. The promised day of the house of David never could have come unless we take the greater kingdom into account. Such was St. Peter's argument in Acts ii. 30. So in St. Paul's first recorded sermon notice the force with which he dwells on 'the *sure mercies* of David' (Acts xiii. 34). When God gave David the kingdom He promised to befriend Solomon, and He said, 'I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son' (2 Sam. vii. 14). It is clear that the words refer to Solomon, that the visible king was under the care of the Invisible. But we feel this must have meant more than that Solomon should reign for awhile and die. It asserted that there was an actual relationship between God and the Jewish king and nation. They did not understand *how* this could be, but there was the promise. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows that such a promise could only be fulfilled in Christ, who was the flower and perfection of the Kingdom of David, and he therefore quotes these words and declares that they refer to Christ (Heb. i. 5). The same truth meets us all through the history of the monarchy. It would have been a beginning without an end, if the outward had not been throughout the sign of the coming on of the Divine and Invisible. And this is the key to Old Testament prophecy; not a fast-and-loose way of making words mean anything, but the strict interpretation of God's whole system with His people.

We trace a progress in the Divine Revelation as we pass through the Old Testament. First, God taught His chosen ones to believe in His Unity. It was one of the truths laid hold of by Abraham, who believed also in God's *righteousness, faithfulness, providence*. It was the necessary foundation for all which followed. He taught some, too, outside the

chosen people, Melchizedek and Job for example. He gave fuller revelations to Moses than to Abraham, and delivered, through him, a written *Law*. 'Moses stands in history the Father of Legislation.' And a progress in knowledge is manifested in the commentary upon Exodus found in the Book of Deuteronomy. In him, too, we see the rise of the *Prophetic* order, and he is the first of *historians*. The prophetic gift grew unto the days of Samuel, the reformer and the statesman, who 'gathered round him at Naioth, where his own house was situated, a number of young men whom he trained in reading, writing, and music.' In David, the *Psalmist*, we see a further progress. His contributions to sacred literature were the means of conveying fresh light concerning the promised Saviour, as in Ps. xl. 6-8, a distinct foreshadowing of the Incarnation. But further, the Psalms of David mark an advance in spirituality; there is a greater fulness and depth than in any writings before. 'It is very important,' has been well said, 'that the Psalms should be studied from an historical point of view; *i.e.* not as ideal patterns of devotion revealed from heaven, irrespective of times and circumstances, but as actual utterances of individual piety under a dispensation of religion which, in the order of time, was intended to prepare for the higher teachings of Christianity If they be regarded as voices floating in the air, after coming down from heaven, and not as expressions of thoughts and feelings gushing up from the depths of human souls, agitated by conflict, their nature and their meaning are misapprehended.' Who does not see the wondrous moral force in the Psalms of David working its way upwards to what is perfect! For example, in the fifty-first Psalm, where the most appalling instance of backsliding which the Old Testament contains gives origin to the most touching of all songs of repentance? The *plaintive* songs, never, even in the deepest distress, without hope, the songs of *grateful adoration*, the *intercessory* (xx., cxxiii., cxliv.), the *didactic* (xxxiv.), not to speak now of the

Prophetic, are all marvellous in the spiritual insight with which God has endowed the writer.

10. **The Prophets.**—Passing over the writings of the philosopher, Solomon, who began his teachings with inculcating that ‘the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom’ (Prov. i. 7), we come to the Prophets. The teacher will find the trouble he will take in analysing them amply rewarded by the fresh streams of knowledge that he will open. Fresh revelations are made here also; the clearer vision of the perfect *Kingdom* grows with the prophets’ experience of the weakness and failure of the earthly kings, one after another. But above all, as Isaiah sees in vision his nation captive and cast out for its sin, he sees too, with a light and a glory such as had never been vouchsafed to man before, that the Deliverer too must enter with boundless sympathy into the misery of the outcasts, must be ‘despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief’ (Isaiah liii.).

And never do the prophets lose sight of the comforting but awful and solemnising truth that God is a Being with whom men have to do every hour, who created, preserves, rules over them. Faith in Him is an absolute necessity; there is no comfort or help to be gained by mere speculations about Him, nor by poetical imaginations. No poetry can be of use except it be altogether true. The whole Old Testament is full of the truth that the Lord is King, that His eyelids try the children of men. There is always *growth*—the past is never obliterated, but it is continually reproduced and augmented. The progress is full of memories, but fuller of hopes; tells the meaning of past history, but tells too of better days to come, higher truth, purer righteousness. And the last chapter of all sees in the future John the Baptist, the last of the Prophets, the witness of the Incarnate Lamb of God, and closes with words which seem to gather up all the past books into a few burning words:—‘Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I com-

manded unto Him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'

So the Old Testament ends. It was our schoolmaster, or tutor, to bring us to Christ ; and, while pointing forward to deliverance, puts prominently forward God's hatred of sin. The last words, therefore, are characteristic words. There is surely a touching and beautiful significance in the fact (noted by Bengel) that when Christ, the mediator of the New Testament, opened His mouth to proclaim the law of His Kingdom, He opened with the word '*Blessed*' (Matt. v. 3).

THE END.





